

THE OLD HICKORY DIVISION IT RANKS HIGH AMONG CRACK AMERICAN DIVISIONS IN PERSONNEL, SERVICE AND EXPLOITS

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September 29th is the anniversary of the smashing of the Hindenburg Line by the boys of the 30th or Old Hickory Division, a feat of arms unsurpassed in the World War, and paralleling the proudest achievements of our race. Since the 30th Division was composed primarily of boys from North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee, the anniversary of this great fight is the time when the men of the 30th Division reunite in some one of these states. This year in Asheville, N. C., last year in Greenville, S. C., and next year they will meet in some city of Tennessee.

The 30th Division was organized in the summer of 1917, with the National Guard of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee as a nucleus. This nucleus was, of course, made up of volunteers, many of whom had just enlisted for the World War. As will be readily recollected, however, the whole nation volunteered for service by putting into operation the Selective Service Law, which from its very inception beat out the volunteer system as a wiser and more effective means of getting recruits, finally causing the authorities to discontinue the system of recruiting by the volunteer system so that in the last days of the war the army was recruited altogether by the draft.

In September, 1917, the first contingents of the draft or the National Army, as it was then called, met at Camp Jackson, S. C. At the same time the volunteers of the National Guard met at Camp Sevier, S. C. Immediately the War Department began to fill the incomplete ranks of the National Guard from the inexhaustible reservoir of the National Army at Camp Jackson. Thus it was that the draft and the volunteer systems combined to make up the Old Hickory Division.

Moreover, after the trained divisions had gone to France in the spring of 1918, the War Department devised yet another system of training, this time not to make new divisions, but to keep the old divisions recruited to full strength. This was the Replacement Camp system, which drew its recruits wholly through the draft system. Camp Jackson, Camp Gordon, Camp Lee, for examples, became replacement training centers, drawing men from all over the country, so that when these replacements were sent into the old divisions, they changed the division personnel from local to national. Thus it came about that the Old Hickory Division left the State as a unit from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, and came back from the war with men in its ranks from every state in the Union and from several foreign countries. Thus also came about that this division started out as a volunteer National Guard organization, but transformed to an organization representing every system of recruiting employed during the war.

But it remained, nevertheless, primarily a division representing the best fighting blood of the three states which now take turns in honoring the exploits of the Old Hickory Division.

The 30th Division and the 27th (New York) Division formed the 2nd American Army Corps, which Corps operated altogether with the British armies. In the following account it must be borne in mind that the exploits of the 30th Division took place in conjunction with the 27th Division at times, and always in conjunction with elements of the British. However; It should likewise be borne in mind that while a division may act in conjunction with other divisions, it nevertheless has a definite job of its own to do, by the performance of which its success or failure is judged. And therefore the work the 30th Division was called upon to do on September 29, 1918 is singled out so that we may see just wherein honor is due to its men. Every statement is based on official records.